

REMARKS

The foregoing amendments in independent claims 1 and 8-10 are intended to define the present invention even more clearly over the art of record.

These amendments make it clear that the claimed converting of collected device information in the transmission processing section of claims 1 and 8 and the claimed converting of the collected device information step in claims 9 and 10 applies to both the mail data and the attached data. Together they form a mail message for device information. This is clear from Fig. 1 showing mail data M2 and attached data M3 as components of the data information mail transmitted with header M1.

The present invention "allows: preset information to be organized as data attached to an email; and other information to be organized as mail data, for transmission of device information to a predetermined receiver as a single email made up of the mail data and the attached data." The present invention has as its object to prevent leaking of information about the state of use of a client's copier by transmitting emails containing specific information that cannot be accessed easily. As argued in more detail below, no prior art reference discloses the transmission of a single email constructed as defined by the pending claims (i.e., generated after both the mail data and the attached data are so organized), nor is there any teaching or suggestion of doing so for the purpose of maintaining the confidentiality of selection information.

In other words, one of the main features of the present invention is converting the device information into both attached data and mail data. The effect of this is that the part of the information converted to attached data is "less likely perceived by the third party, to send the produced mail to the server 12. This arrangement enables prevention of leakage information, even in the case where a device information mail is intercepted by a hacker or the like." (Specification, page 37, lines 11-15)

In the present invention, the device information of a digital complex machine 30 can be sent in two ways. The first is mail data M2 and the second is attached data M3 (see Figure 1). The device information to be sent as mail data M2 includes document data composed of basic information. The device information to be sent as attached data M3 includes document data composed of "state of use" and "trouble" information (Specification, page 37, lines 2-5).

The state of use information includes such things as a count of a counter according to a quantity of jobs on the user side and trouble information includes such things as paper jam history. This information is confidential information that the user does not wish to let a third party know about (see, e.g. the specification, page 37, line 20 to page 38, line 4). Since this state of use information is confidential, the invention sends it as attached data, not as mail data. Therefore, an important feature of the invention is to send both mail data M2 and attached data M3 together. See also the related discussion at least on page 36, line 18 to page 37, line 19. The confidential nature of the attached data M3 is discussed there and at least at page 37, line 20 to page 38, line 4 and page 38, lines 17-25, page 39, lines 1-6, and page 58, lines 9-14.

The foregoing amendments emphasize this feature, which provides the confidentiality advantage, and others.

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claims 1, 4-10 and 33-35 under 35 USC 103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,631,247 to Motoyama et al. ("Motoyama") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,859,213 to Carter ("Carter").

With respect to Motoyama, the Examiner agrees (page 2, lines 8-9 of the present Action) that Motoyama "does not disclose a system where data is selected to be sent either as an email or an attachment within the email".

On the other hand, Carter discloses that: "the attachment mechanism allows a user to select whether the attachment is retrieved and attached to an e-mail message as a resource locator (such as a URL) or as one or more source files" (Carter, Col. 3, L51-58). Carter also discloses sending the information as mail data in the message body, with the problem of size being an issue (Carter, Col. 3, L10-13). However, Carter does not disclose or mention that both attachment data and mail data can be used together to send device information, as claimed.

At page 2, part 3, the Examiner argues, *inter alia*, that "it is well known in the art that large attachments can cause problems in transmission," However, the principal problem addressed by this invention is the confidentiality of information being transmitted, not the size of the data file being transmitted. Carter's solution to the file size problem, as noted immediately above, is for a user to close an email mode of transmission and transmission as a URL or "one or more source files." This user selection is not compatible with the Motoyama system, nor does either Motoyama or Carter teach, suggest, or motivate their combination to protect confidential device information as attachment data sent together with mail data as one mail message for device information.

In view of the foregoing amendments and Remarks, Applicants urge the claims define clear cut patentable differences over the art of record, whether taken alone or in combination, and that this application is otherwise in condition for allowance.

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